

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Policy for Public Funding of Memberships in Professional Associations

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Purpose

To provide department heads with guidelines for the public funding of memberships in professional associations.

Public funding of memberships is warranted when a clear and justifiable potential benefit exists, such as:

1. County management or processes receive a benefit from the membership such as through the sharing of technical knowledge, the obtaining of needed data or information, or the advantage of collective positions in matters of public policy and legislation.
2. Designated individuals benefit through opportunities for professional growth, continued job-related education, and/or knowledge of the technical aspects of their work.

Policy:

Responsibility for the justifiable expending of budgeted public funds is upon department heads and appointing authorities. They shall consider the purpose of such memberships, as cited above and the following guidelines for public funding of membership.

1. Institutional memberships (on behalf of the County as an agency) will be limited to non-profit public interest groups such as the National Association of Counties, etc.
2. Attorneys employed on a permanent full-time basis in positions requiring that they be attorneys may have their required annual dues to the State Bar paid for by the County.
3. Annual fees, for State licenses for permanent, full-time architects, surveyors, etc. may be paid for by the County.
4. Memberships in social, public service, or political organizations, or any listed as a lobby under the Political Reform Act of 1974 shall generally not be funded from County funds. Exceptions are those professional associations of administrators or directors of County departments related to the umbrella organizations of the National Association of Counties, and the California State Association of Counties.
5. Memberships in organizations whose charters discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin or disability are not to be funded with County monies.

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6. Elected officials and their staff are exempted but encouraged to use this policy as a guide.

Procedure

1. The annual travel program budget instructions issued by the Auditor and Controller shall include a form and process to list all memberships. The form shall provide for the identification of the group to be joined, the number of employees joining, and the cost. Both the travel and memberships program budgets shall be considered during the annual budget review.

2. The Auditor and Controller may include spot sample checks of adherence to this policy during regular audits.

3. Payment forms and procedures shall be prescribed by the County Auditor and Controller.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-01.

Board Action

4-15-80 (10)

10-5-82 (58)

10-30-84 (99)

5-15-96 (11)

CAO Reference.

1. Chief Financial Officer/Auditor and Controller
2. Chief Administrative Office